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ABSTRACT

Intended to help administrators, curriculum developers, and teachers integrate occupational health and safety into Australian vocational courses on bricklaying, metal fabrication, and horticulture, this document suggests specific policies and provides further amplification concerning three general policies for that integration. The three general policies are: (1) the program for technical and further education (TAFE) curricula for all vocational courses include relevant occupational health and safety issues, integrated at appropriate stages of the educational program; (2) all vocational courses submitted for accreditation or reaccreditation include relevant occupational health and safety issues; and (3) staff development programs in the teaching of occupational health and safety be provided. Following an introduction describing the project, the specific policies are elaborated. Three appendices contain a graphic portrayal of the ways in which occupational health and safety training material can be integrated into TAFE courses and a list of objectives, target groups, and goals concerning national training and education policy and strategy for occupational health and safety. (CML)

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TAFE NATIONAL CENTRE FOR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

WORKSAFE AUSTRALIA
NATIONAL OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY COMMISSION

INTEGRATING OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY INTO TAFE COURSES: POLICY GUIDELINES

GRAHAM HILL AND PAULINE MAGEEAN

ADELAIDE 1989

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INTEGRATING OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY INTO TAFE COURSES: POLICY GUIDELINES

Graham L Hill and Pauline Mageean

TAFE National Centre for Research and Development

ADELAIDE 1989

This project has been funded by the National Occupational Health and Safety Commission (Worksafe Australia).

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and the TAFE National Centre for Research and Development Ltd., 1989

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FOREWORD BY THE CHAIRMAN, NATIONAL OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMISSION

The National Occupational Health and Safety Commission is committed to improving the quality of the Australian working environment. Its primary role is to lead national efforts to reduce the incidence of occupational death, trauma and disease.

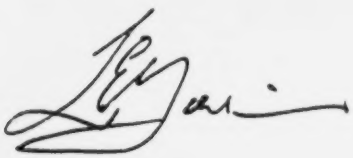
Over 500 people are killed and more than 300,000 are injured in Australia each year as a result of occupational accidents. The National Occupational Health and Safety Commission, through its operational arm, Worksafe Australia, is working with its members, the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU), the Confederation of Australian Industry (CAI) and State/Territory and Commonwealth Authorities, to reduce this tragic loss and suffering and its unnecessary burden on the national economy.

One element of the National Commission's training and education strategy seeks to ensure that all employees, and those preparing to enter the workforce, are provided with appropriate occupational health and safety training.

This project, which is designed to ensure that all students undertaking TAFE vocational courses have access to high quality occupational health and safety training, is a major part of this strategy.

The National Commission acknowledges the co-operative efforts of the ACTU, the CAI and the States and Territories in assisting the TAFE National Centre for Research and Development to achieve nationally agreed occupational health and safety training policies and guidelines for TAFE vocational courses.

I commend the Australian Committee on TAFE Curriculum for initiating this important project and I look forward to steady progress in its implementation.



LOU MARKS
Chairman
National Occupational Health and
Safety Commission

June, 1989.

FOREWORD BY THE CHAIRMAN, AUSTRALIAN COMMITTEE ON TAFE CURRICULUM

Occupational health and safety issues have always been important to TAFE Authorities. This concern was reflected in the initiative by the Australian Committee on TAFE Curriculum (previously known as the Curriculum Projects Steering Group) to suggest to the TAFE National Centre for Research and Development that they should seek funds to develop national common core material in occupational health and safety. Those funds were provided by the National Occupational Health and Safety Commission. The Australian Committee on TAFE Curriculum gratefully acknowledges this financial support.

The project outcomes include three publications and national workshops. The publications will help administrators, curriculum developers and teachers. The workshops will help participants to use the national materials to satisfy local needs.

I am pleased to acknowledge the importance of the project, and the usefulness to TAFE Authorities of the outcomes. I am also pleased to have the opportunity of commending staff of the TAFE National Centre for Research and Development for the effective manner in which the project has been conducted.

Trevor Leo.

TREVOR LEO
Chairman
Australian Committee on TAFE Curriculum

June, 1989.

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SUMMARY

The suggested general policies for integrating occupational health and safety into TAFE courses are:

- that TAFE curricula for all vocational courses include relevant occupational health and safety issues, integrated at appropriate stages of the educational programme;
- that all vocational courses submitted for accreditation/reaccreditation include relevant occupational health and safety issues;
- that staff development programmes in the teaching of occupational health and safety be provided.

The suggested general policies are amplified in Section 2 of this publication.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This project could not have been done without the generous support, both financial and advisory, from the National Occupational Health and Safety Commission.

We would particularly like to thank our advisory committee:

Mr. Alan Daniel of the Victorian State Training Board;

Dr. Bill Hall, Executive Director of the TAFE National Centre for Research and Development;

Ms. Katherine Lea of the Confederation of Australian Industry, National Employers Industrial Council;

Mr. Dave Mannes of the National Occupational Health and Safety Commission;

Mr. Roger Mathers, Director Curriculum SA Department of TAFE and the representative of the Australian Committee on TAFE Curriculum;

Mr. Ken McLean of the Australian Council of Trade Unions;

Mr. Graham Mill, Chairman of the SA Industrial and Commercial Training Commission.

Special thanks are also due to Ms. Francis Bray and Mr. Peter Murray of the National Occupational Health and Safety Commission and to Mr. Bob Hall of the Occupational Health and Safety Unit of Ballarat College of Advanced Education. We would also like to thank:

- the principals and staff of the colleges which we visited;
- the TAFE lecturers and curriculum experts who provided invaluable comments at the workshops;
- the lecturers who returned the questionnaires;
- the researchers working on other projects with whom we liaised;
- I.C.I. Australia, Toxicology Information Section;
- the Australian Council of Trade Unions;
- the Confederation of Australian Industry;

. South Australian Health Commission, Occupational Health and Radiation Control Branch;

. The National Acoustics Laboratories;

. The NSW Department of Industrial Relations and Employment;

. The Victorian Department of Labour;

. The Occupational Health and Safety experts commissioned to produce material for this project;

. Ms. Georgina Barnett who produced the delightful artwork.

Graham Hill and Pauline Mageean

1. INTRODUCTION

THE IMPORTANCE OF OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY.

Occupational health and safety is increasingly recognised as an issue of national economic and social importance. As the major provider of vocational education in Australia TAFE has a crucial role to play in providing education and training in occupational health and safety. There is an urgent need to integrate occupational health and safety into all TAFE vocational courses. If students can develop a real concern for occupational health and safety at the start of their careers, the workforce will become increasingly conscious of health and safety issues and insistent upon these being addressed in the workplace.

This policy guidelines document has been prepared as part of the research project Integrating occupational health and safety into TAFE courses. The project was conducted by the TAFE National Centre for Research and Development and made possible by a grant from the National Occupational Health and Safety Commission, known as Worksafe Australia.

The recommendations in this document are not intended to be binding upon the TAFE Authorities, instead they are goals towards which TAFE is aiming. As such, they have been endorsed by the Australian Committee on TAFE Curriculum, Worksafe Australia, the Australian Council of Trade Unions and the Confederation of Australian Industry.

Current statistics indicate that each year in Australia there are over 500 work-related fatalities and approximately 300,000 cases of work-related injury or disease. Estimates indicate that the national cost in terms of workers' compensation is in excess of $4 billion. The costs of lost production, rehabilitation and replacement and repair of equipment bring the total cost nearer to $9 billion annually.

In 1950 a Joint Committee of the International Labour Organisation and the World Health Organisation defined occupational health as:

- the promotion and maintenance of the highest degree of physical, mental and social well being of workers in all occupations;
- the prevention among workers of departures from health caused by their working conditions;
- the protection of workers in their employment from risks resulting from factors adverse to health;

- the placing and maintenance of the worker in an occupational environment adapted to his/her physiological and psychological ability.

This definition is still the accepted standard. It recognises the importance of adapting the workplace to the employee.

Despite the fact that occupational health and safety has always been an issue of concern to government, employers and employees and their representatives it is only in recent years that emphasis has been placed on the concept of adapting the workplace to the employee. Prior to this the victim of an accident was often blamed for "causing the accident". Today occupational injury and disease is understood to be predominantly a problem of the nature, design and control of the workplace.

In Australia this understanding has resulted in two significant developments. These are:

- **the increasing use of hazard reduction methods based on the following 'hierarchy of controls'**. Whenever possible preference should be given to number i, if that cannot be done control number ii would be used, and only when neither i or ii can be used should number iii be used.

  i. containing the hazard - whether it is a substance or some physical, electrical, or mechanical energy - at its source,

  ii. interfering with the transmission of the hazard to the worker, and

  iii. providing the worker with protective clothing and equipment.

  The first two types of controls, controlling at source and controlling transmission, are commonly called 'engineering control'. Using engineering controls is more reliable than expecting people to use personal protective equipment. Once installed, engineering solutions work day after day with minimum routine intervention beyond maintenance and monitoring.

- **reform of occupational health and safety legislation**. Over the last ten years most state governments and the Federal Government have enacted legislation and reorganised their administration of occupational health and safety. State governments have replaced earlier legislation, which was directed to particular industries and processes such as mining, manufacturing and construction, with 'new style' enabling legislation, which covers all employees and includes them at a state and workplace level in the strategy for prevention.

The new style legislation in the states:

- brings together all of the major pieces of existing health and safety legislation under one legislative umbrella;
- rationalises the government agencies responsible for administering and enforcing occupational health and safety legislation;
- establishes a tripartite Occupational Health and Safety Commission which plays a major role in the development of regulations and codes of practice;
- embodies a comprehensive series of general duties on employers and employees;
- provides for enforcement through an occupational health and safety inspectorate; and
- provides for occupational health and safety representatives and/or committees.

In 1981 the National Labour Consultative Council formed a national tripartite OHS committee to look at the need for improvements in working conditions in Australian industry.

Under a commitment in the ALP/ACTU Accord the Federal Government established the National Occupational Health and Safety Commission (Worksafe Australia) which has a tripartite structure consisting of representatives from government and the peak councils of the trade unions and employers. For the first time in Australia there is a co-ordinated, national approach to occupational health and safety.

Essential elements identified by the National Occupational Health and Safety Commission (1984) for successful occupational health and safety programs are:

- **prevention** - through the organisation and design of work and the recognition, evaluation and control of the causes of occupational disease and injury;
- **equity** - everyone has the right to a healthy and safe working environment. This element includes the protection of everyone at work and in the community from all hazards from the working environment;
- **participation** - by employees and employers in making decisions about the degree of risk and options for eliminating or controlling hazards at the workplace;
- **responsibility** of all concerned - employees, employers, government, unions, manufacturers, designers and suppliers. It includes consultative mechanisms, information, education and training.

By 1987 the members of the National Commission had endorsed a strategy for occupational health and safety training and education. The objectives of this strategy are:

- to contribute to ensuring that all people whose decisions and actions affect the Australian workplace are equipped with appropriate knowledge and expertise in occupational health and safety;

- to co-ordinate the national development of high-quality, cost-effective training and education programes in occupational health and safety which meet the needs of the workplace and the community.

Consistent with these objectives the following target groups were identified for priority action:

Managerial Decision-Makers - to assist in ensuring that those who make organisational, financial and managerial decisions affecting the health and safety of the workplace have access to appropriate occupational health and safety training.

Technical and Design Decision-Makers - to assist in ensuring that those who make technical and design decisions affecting the workplace have access to appropriate occupational health and safety training.

Employees - to assist in ensuring that all employees,and those preparing to enter the workforce, are provided with appropriate occupational health and safety training.

Occupational Health and Safety Practitioners/Professionals - to facilitate the systematic development of adequate training and education programs for occupational health and safety practitioners.

BACKGROUND TO THE PROJECT

This project was initiated by the Curriculum Projects Steering Group (now known as the Australian Committee on TAFE Curriculum). This committee had identified a need for the development of materials to assist TAFE authorities in integrating occupational health and safety into vocational courses. Worksafe Australia funded the project as one means of fostering occupational health and safety training that was consistent with the Worksafe strategy on education and training.

The project has had the assistance and support of an advisory Committee which reflects the National Commission's tripartite approach. It has representatives from Worksafe Australia, the Australian Council of Trade Unions, the Confederation of Australian Industries, the South Australian Industrial and Commercial Training Commission, South Australian and Victorian TAFE Authorities and the Australian Committee on TAFE Curriculum.

While substantial occupational health and safety material may exist within present TAFE courses, only a small proportion reflects both a preventive approach and the needs of students. TAFE college lecturers are constantly assailed with new information relevant to their teaching; applying this to a specific occupation in an educational process needs careful consideration. This project is designed to introduce the principles of the new legislation and current trends in occupational health and safety as an aid to its integration into TAFE courses.

No one knows the long term effects upon workers of all the materials and environmental conditions they encounter at work. New substances and processes are continuously being introduced. TAFE curricula cannot include detailed information on all these immediately. However students must be given an awareness of the importance of occupational health and safety and how this concern should permeate all aspects of their working lives. Whenever a new situation arises, occupational health and safety should be one of the factors they would automatically consider.

Clearly there are implications here for the staff development of TAFE lecturers both initially when this material is integrated into courses and later as new products and processes are used. The way in which staff development is provided will be determined individually by the TAFE authorities.

Each TAFE authority will teach in accordance with its own state or territory legislation and regulations. However the essential issues and concepts involved in recognising, evaluating and controlling hazards remain the same.

TAFE has a responsibility to teach not only the knowledge and skills for specific vocations but also the knowledge and skills related to the health and safety issues associated with those vocations.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROJECT

Three trades areas were selected as the focus for the development of the project:

- Bricklaying;
- Metal fabrication; and
- Horticulture.

These were selected on the basis of incidence of, and variety among, occupational health and safety hazards. It was considered important to include a trade with a significant number of female apprentices (horticulture).

To determine the present status of occupational health and safety in TAFE trades courses and to identify needs, a questionnaire was sent to colleges teaching any of the three trades areas. To prevent a bias towards any particular state, no more than three colleges were approached for any one trade in any TAFE authority. Each college nominated three lecturers per trade area to return the questionnaires. These were provided with a return paid envelope to ensure confidentiality.

One hundred and sixteen questionnaires were returned. These revealed that there is a great variety in what is being taught in occupational heath and safety. All lecturers teach some first aid but there is considerably less emphasis on topics such as prevention through work organisation and discussion of psychological diseases such as stress. The need for regular updating in occupational health and safety was made clear.

Visits were made to six colleges in New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia to discuss the project with staff and in particular to learn in detail how occupational health and safety is being taught. The visits and questionnaires showed that greater emphasis in TAFE curricula is needed on:

- current practices in occupational health and safety, including legislation and the participation practices now being used in industry;
- the processes used by employers and employees to determine the risk associated with work practices; and
- the organisation of occupational health and safety in industry.

Many TAFE lecturers identified a need for more up-to-date information about the specific topics of:

- manual handling;
- noise control;
- hazard recognition and control;
- musculo-skeletal diseases;
- industrial chemicals.

Information was exchanged with researchers involved in associated projects: one based at Holmesglen College of TAFE and Ballarat College of Advanced Education which aims to integrate occupational health and safety into Victorian apprenticeships, and another project, an Annotated Bibliography of Learning Resources in Occupational Health and Safety, conducted in Queensland for the Australian Committee on TAFE Curriculum.

Visits were made to the Occupational Health and Safety Units of the Australian Council of Trade Unions and the Confederation of Australian industries. Occupational Health and Safety professionals at Worksafe Australia, the National Acoustics Laboratories, the New south Wales Department of Industrial Relations and Employment and the Victorian Department of Labour all provided valuable background information.

A list of curriculum topics was circulated to experts in occupational health and safety for their endorsement.

Workshops were conducted in Adelaide and Perth. Each of these were divided into two parts. The first part was held with trade lecturers and other interested college staff to:

- trial the objectives, both general and specific;
- recommend any support material required; and
- inform the lecturers about occupational health and safety objectives and current policy.

The second part of each workshop was held with TAFE senior curriculum development staff to discuss processes whereby the materials could be integrated into TAFE curricula.

The scope and complexity of the knowledge now required, the continual change in technology and work practices, the lack of specialist assistance for teaching staff - all require major attention for occupational health and safety to be taught adequately. Many TAFE lecturers have not had the opportunity to update their knowledge on occupational health and safety matters and will require additional training. Colleges may not have suitable resources to support occupational health and safety teaching.

Existing curricula relating to occupational health and safety often does not meet the needs of industry and the policies and strategies of the Commonwealth and state/territory governments. Developing suitable curricula to fulfil this need will not be easy.

This project identifies the occupational health and safety material which should be covered, not where in the course this ought to occur. That is a professional decision for curriculum developers and lecturers.

2. SUGGESTED POLICIES AND DISCUSSION

The Summary lists three suggested general policies covering:

A. curriculum development

B. accreditation/re-accreditation

C. staff development.

Each of these suggested general policies is now amplified into suggested specific policies.

A. CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT: SUGGESTED SPECIFIC POLICIES

There are eleven suggested specific policies arising from the first general suggested policy:

> A. that TAFE curricula for all vocational courses include relevant occupational health and safety issues, integrated at appropriate stages of the educational programme.

SUGGESTED SPECIFIC POLICY A1.

That education programs provided by TAFE authorities be consistent with the aims and objectives of national training and education policies and strategies of the National Occupational Health and Safety Commission.

COMMENTS

1.* A major objective of the National Occupational Health and Safety Commission is 'to improve the quality of the Australian working environment'. Its primary role is to 'coordinate and facilitate efforts to reduce the incidence of occupational death, trauma and disease'.

2. The National Occupational Health and Safety Commission has a role in providing a concerted national approach to the development of education and training in occupational health and safety. (See appendix B)

3.* The National Commission will assume a leading role in:

   a) articulating national policy objectives

   b) defining principles and guidelines for quality

   c) promoting innovation and development in education and training

   d) setting priorities for target groups

   e) monitoring progress and assessing achievements.

* Taken from National Occupational Health and Safety Commission document, October 1987.

SUGGESTED SPECIFIC POLICY A2.

That all TAFE education programs be consistent with the aims and objectives of the relevant state or territory legislation relating to occupational health and safety.

COMMENTS

1. Various agencies (e.g. government departments) within states/territories have the responsibility of putting into effect the legislation associated with occupational health and safety.

2. The governments, in association with the national Commission, develop policies and strategies to be implemented within states/territories.

3. There are differences in legislation between states and teritories. This requires education programs developed within each state/territory to be consistent with its particular legislation.

4. Current trends in occupational health and safety legislation apply to all people at work across the whole range of vocations.

SUGGESTED SPECIFIC POLICY A3.

That curriculum development procedures within TAFE reflect a tripartite approach in the consideration of occupational health and safety matters.

COMMENTS

1. A fundamental principle in the implementation of occupational health and safety policies and strategies by the National Commission is the use of a tripartite approach with employers, employees and state/territory and commonwealth governments represented.

2. The tripartite approach is also reflected in the current state/territory legislation where employers and employees, through a committee process, are jointly involved in creating a healthy and safe working environment.

3. The tripartite approach will involve the inclusion on curriculum development committees of representatives of appropriate government agencies, employer and employee organisations.

SUGGESTED SPECIFIC POLICY A4.

That TAFE education programs emphasise the application of current knowledge of principles and practice of occupational health and safety in the working environment.

COMMENTS

1. Occupational health and safety is concerned with the general well-being of the individual in a working environment and is influenced by government legislation, policies and strategies.

2. Education programs related to vocations must provide current knowledge and skills of occupational health and safety matters.

3. The scope and application of knowledge relating to occupational health and safety issues are continually expanding.

4. This process of expansion may have an effect upon the quality and standard of education programs provided by TAFE, the content of curricula and expertise of the teaching staff.

5. TAFE teaching staff's knowledge of occupational health and safety matters may not reflect current practices used in industry in response to the policies and strategies of commonwealth and state/territory governments.

6. Curriculum objectives I and III in chapter 2 of the Curriculum guidelines relate to this policy.

SUGGESTED SPECIFIC POLICY A5.

That the curricula for each vocation include relevant occupational health and safety topics, integrated at appropriate stages throughout the education program.

COMMENT

1. The range of topics within the field of occupational health and safety is very large.

2. The relevance of the topics may vary between occupations and within occupations depending on the specific working environment. (See appendix A)

3. The curriculum for a specific topic may also vary over time with new knowledge and as different work methods are used in industry.

4. The topics should reflect the particular occupational health and safety issues which employees are likely to meet within their working lives.

5. The importance of a specific topic depends upon how dangerous it is and the incidence of injuries or disease related to it in the particular vocational area.

6. The more important a specific topic the more emphasis will be placed upon developing knowledge and skills related to it, progressively throughout an educational program.

SUGGESTED SPECIFIC POLICY A6.

That all TAFE vocational programs provide students with general information about occupational health and safety.

COMMENT

1. There is a need for TAFE vocational programs to include general knowledge of occupational health and safety matters which can be applied to any vocation.

2. This includes, for example, a general overview of the principles of:

   - occupational health and safety;
   - legislation;
   - procedures used in industry to create a healthy and safe working environment.

3. Awareness is also required of physical, chemical, biological, psychological and social hazards in the workplace. Students should be introduced to these even when they may be of lesser relevance to a specific occupation, e.g. industrial chemicals in clerical occupations, or radiation in teaching occupations.

4. This policy relates to curriculum objective I in chapter 3 of the curriculum guidelines publication.

SUGGESTED SPECIFIC POLICY A7.

That TAFE vocational programs include learning objectives related to occupational health and safety issues relevant to the specific occupation.

COMMENTS

1. The range of topics which could be included in the field of occupational health and safety is vast. Whether a topic is relevant depends on the vocation, and it follows that consideration needs to be given to <u>how</u> relevant a topic is to that specific vocation.

2. If a topic is considered to be relevant to a specific vocation, consideration must be given to its importance. This will be important in determining the time to be devoted to that topic.

3. Following the determination of the topics and their importance, learning objectives can be derived which will be related to the occupational health and safety issues of the specific occupation.

4. The process by which priorities for topics can be determined for particular programs is detailed in chapters one and two of <u>Integrating occupational health and safety into TAFE courses: curriculum topics</u>.

SUGGESTED SPECIFIC POLICY A8.

That assessment of students' knowledge of occupational health and safety issues be incorporated into the assessment plan for their studies.

COMMENT

1. Occupational health and safety matters affect every person at work. It is important that all people at work are given appropriate occupational health and safety training.

2. The time devoted to a topic within an educational program and the importance of the topic to a specific vocation will affect the weight given to it in assessment.

3. It is appropriate that when items are assessed, questions or other means of assessment are designed to allow knowledge of the related occupational health and safety issues also to be assessed.

4. Assessment of occupational health and safety issues is discussed at length in Chapter 3 of Integrating occupational health and safety into TAFE courses: curriculum guidelines.

SUGGESTED SPECIFIC POLICY A9.

That occupational health and safety topics be included in vocational programs with the aim of providing knowledge, skills and attitudes to enable the student to apply healthy and safe work practices throughout his/her working life.

COMMENT

1. The National Occupational Health and Safety Commission has an objective of ensuring that all people in the workforce are provided with appropriate occupational health and safety training. (See appendix B)

2. TAFE authorities are a major provider of vocational education which may determine the career paths for individuals for a major proportion of their working lives.

3. The foundation of knowledge provided in a TAFE vocational course will influence attitudes and decisions made by individuals in their careers.

4. General and specific knowledge of occupational health and safety matters provided during TAFE vocational programs will enable individuals to apply healthy and safe work practices in their occupations. (See chapter 1 of Integrating occupational health and safety into TAFE courses: curriculum guidelines.)

5. This policy relates closely to curriculum objectives II and III in chapter 2 of the above publication.

SUGGESTED SPECIFIC POLICY A10.

That TAFE staff be encouraged to develop innovative approaches to the teaching of occupational health and safety topics in vocational programs.

COMMENTS

1. Vocational courses have been taught by TAFE authorities for many years and the application of the curriculum topics can be readily identified in industry. However occupational health and safety topics are not so clearly identified, due to failure by some industries to provide adequate occupational health and safety programs in the past. The changes in legislation, the identification of new hazards to the health and well-being of workers, and other changing circumstances will change this.

2. Occupational health and safety topics are an important part of, and should be embedded in, the main stream of knowledge and skills in a vocational program. It is important that teaching staff do not concentrate upon material with which they are familiar at the expense of possibly new areas such as some aspects of occupational health and safety.

3. There is a wide range of resource materials available in the field of occupational health and safety.

4. Existing resource materials may not reflect the major occupational health and safety issues related to a specific vocation.

5. Existing resource materials may not comply with national and/or state policies and strategies and legislation.

6. There is a need to develop innovative approaches to the teaching of occupational health and safety topics.

SUGGESTED SPECIFIC POLICY A11.

That staff preparing curricula for a vocational program obtain the assistance of persons with specialist knowledge of occupational health and safety issues related to that vocation.

COMMENTS

1. Occupational health and safety issues affect every person at work.

2. In most work situations throughout Australia, occupational health and safety legislation affects work methods and practices. It puts emphasis on the recognition and evaluation of hazards, and the procedures by which such hazards are controlled so that their effect on the worker is minimised.

3. The hazards which exist at work vary depending on the occupation. In some cases there is a difference of opinion among specialists of the risks of some hazards and their effects on people.

4. Curriculum development committees include representatives from industry, unions, etc who may have advice related to the nature of the occupation, but not the specialist knowledge of occupational health and safety issues related to that occupation. It is therefore necessary that appropriate advice be obtained about occupational health and safety matters at the appropriate stages during curriculum development.

5. The National Occupational Health and Safety Commission is an important source of expert advice. Its National Training and Education Policy is provided in appendix B.

B. ACCREDITATION/RE-ACCREDITATION

There are five suggested specific policies arising from the suggested general policy:

B.	that all vocational courses submitted for accreditation/re-accreditation include relevant occupational health and safety issues.

SUGGESTED SPECIFIC POLICY B1.

That all vocational education programs submitted for accreditation or re-accreditation by TAFE authorities comply with TAFE policies relating to the integration of occupational health and safety into courses.

COMMENTS

1. Occupational health and safety matters should be integrated at appropriate stages in a vocational program.

2. The stage at which a specific occupational health and safety topic should be integrated depends on the structure of the curriculum for the course.

3. The emphasis in course development should be to integrate occupational health and safety with other topics of the course.

4. The procedure used for this 'integration' should be explained in the accreditation/re-accreditation documents.

5. How this can be done is described in appendix A of this document.

SUGGESTED SPECIFIC POLICY B2.

That all TAFE vocational education programs include the application of current National Occupational Health and Safety Commission principles and practices in the workplace.

COMMENTS

1. Over the years there has been a significant development of knowledge in occupational health and safety. The application of some of this knowledge to the workplace has been limited.

2. The National Commission, in association with state/territory agencies, has a continuing program for the development of policies and practices related to specific occupational health and safety issues.

3. Vocational education programs should reflect current knowledge of specific occupational health and safety issues using the National Commission and its associated state/territory agencies as the authority on such issues.

4. The National Commission may identify some priorities in occupational health and safety matters and the curriculum developers should consider such priorities.

5. Evidence of the consideration of National Commission policies and practices should be included in the accreditation and re-accreditation documents.

6. The National Training and Education Policy of the National Occupational Health and Safety Commission is provided in Appendix B of this document.

SUGGESTED SPECIFIC POLICY B3.

In every submission for (re-)accreditation, evidence should be included of the considerations which have been given to occupational health and safety in relation to the education program and of consultation with occupational health and safety specialists in the vocational area.

COMMENTS

1. The documents submitted for (re-)accreditation should include a statement describing the procedure by which occupational health and safety matters have been considered in the development of the course.

2. It will also be necessary to provide evidence of advice which has been obtained from specialists about occupational health and safety matters specific to the vocation.

SUGGESTED SPECIFIC POLICY B4.

That all vocational programs submitted for (re-)accreditation demonstrate that a tripartite process has occurred in the development of occupational health and safety curriculum material.

COMMENTS

1. The National Occupational Health and Safety Commission is a tripartite body with representatives of major employer organisations (the Confederation of Australian Industry) and employee organisations (The Australian Council of Trade Unions) and the state/territory and commonwealth governments.

2. Essential components of current approaches to occupational health and safety issues include participation and responsibility. Employers and employees work together with government to improve the working environment.

3. This approach is reflected in recent legislation.

4. It is appropriate that this tripartite approach be used for occupational health and safety.

5. Specific consultations with government, employers and employees will identify current issues which should be covered in TAFE curriculum.

6. A statement describing the tripartite process used should be included in the (re-)accreditation documents.

SUGGESTED SPECIFIC POLICY B5.

That the (re-)accreditation process include consideration of the knowledge of occupational health and safety which the teaching staff will require for the specific vocational education program.

COMMENTS

1. It is acknowledged that the scope and application of knowledge relating to the occupational health and safety issues is continually changing.

2. Up-to-date knowledge may not have been incorporated into current teaching practices used by staff in TAFE colleges.

3. Policies and practices developed by the National Commission and state/territory agencies may not be currently taught.

4. It will be necessary, in the curriculum development procedure, to consider the knowledge required by teaching staff about occupational health and safety matters related to the particular vocation.

5. This will enable any necessary, appropriate training to be given to TAFE teaching staff to update their knowledge of current issues of occupational health and safety related to their subject areas.

6. A statement describing this requirement should be included in the accreditation documents.

7. See chapter 1 of Integrating occupational health and safety into TAFE courses: curriculum guidelines for further discussion related to this policy.

C. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

There are five suggested specific policies arising from the suggested general policy:

C.	that staff development programmes in the teaching of occupational health and safety be provided.

SUGGESTED SPECIFIC POLICY C1.

That training programs in occupational health and safety be provided for TAFE staff.

COMMENTS

1. The National Occupational Health and Safety Commission has stated that the principles of prevention and the available knowledge about occupational health and safety have not always been included in curriculum objectives and guidelines.

2. Teaching staff in TAFE colleges throughout Australia can influence the current knowledge of the community in regard to occupational health and safety.

3. Many of the teaching staff in TAFE have kept up-to-date with current practices relating to their specific vocational areas and, in many cases, have initiated changes to curricula. However, it is apparent that not all TAFE staff are aware of the latest developments in occupational health and safety.

4. The rate of change which is occurring in occupational health and safety makes it necessary to provide opportunities for continuing staff development in current policies and practices for teaching staff.

5. This will provide teaching staff with appropriate background information which can be used in teaching.

SUGGESTED SPECIFIC POLICY C2.

That TAFE staff teaching in vocational programs be given training in occupational health and safety issues related to their specific areas.

COMMENTS

1. It is necessary that teaching staff be given adequate general training on occupational health and safety matters. This will include a general overview of occupational health and safety, legislation, health and safety organisation in industry and a general knowledge of physical, chemical, biological and psychological/social hazards.

2. This general knowledge will provide a foundation but it is also necessary that teaching staff be given information about occupational health and safety issues related to the specific area in which they teach.

3. This specific occupational health and safety knowledge can then be used for the integration of occupational health and safety at the appropriate stages in the specific educational program.

SUGGESTED SPECIFIC POLICY C3.

That if a vocation is considered to be particularly hazardous to health and safety, it is imperative that TAFE staff teaching in the vocational program be given appropriate training.

COMMENTS

1. The risks to health and well-being of workers in some occupations are considered to be higher than others.

2. The risks associated with occupations may also change with the introduction of new technologies and work methods.

3. The level of risk involved in any occupation can be estimated from statistics derived from the National Commission or state/territory agencies.

4. Teaching staff in these vocational areas should be given appropriate training specifically describing these risk situations.

5. This specific training can be used in educational programs for these occupations.

6. Issues relevant to this policy are discussed in chapter 1 of Integrating occupational health and safety into TAFE courses: curriculum guidelines.

SUGGESTED SPECIFIC POLICY C4.

That co-ordinators of TAFE vocational education programs ensure that their teaching staff are able to regularly update their knowledge of health and safety issues.

COMMENTS

1. Programs should be developed to provide for regular training to update the occupational health and safety knowledge of TAFE teaching staff.

2. This knowledge may be of a general nature or specific to a vocational program. It may also include current policies and strategies of the National Commission and state/territory agencies.

3. It may be necessary to use the advice of occupational health and safety specialists who are familiar with changes which are occurring in a specific occupation.

4. The responsibility for the co-ordination of the occupational health and safety training for teaching staff should be included in the duties of the staff member co-ordinating each vocational program.

5. This policy relates to Objective 6 of the National Training and Education Policy and Strategy for Occupational Health and Safety (see appendix B).

SUGGESTED SPECIFIC POLICY C5.

That TAFE training and development programs related to occupational health and safety emphasise the need for a change of attitude by employers and employees.

COMMENTS

1. Current policies of the commonwealth and state/territory governments emphasise a preventive approach to achieve the reduction of disease and injuries to the Australian workforce.

2. Prevention and management of the hazards to health to which a worker may be exposed involve minimising the health effects of physical, chemical, biological and psychological/social hazards.

3. Recent changes by national and state/territory agencies have incorporated many new approaches to improve the health and well-being of the working environment in Australian industry.

4. Some employers and employees have resisted these new approaches and may hinder their application in the workplace.

5. TAFE teaching staff should be made aware that this resistance to change may exist.

6. The improvement of the working environment depends on the application of policies and practices developed by national and state/territory agencies.

APPENDICES

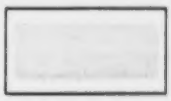
A Incorporating Occupational Health and Safety Training material into TAFE Courses.

B National Training and Education Policy and Strategy for Occupational Health and Safety.

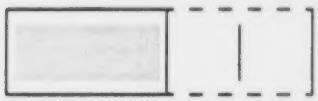
C Publications in the series.

A INCORPORATING OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY TRAINING MATERIAL INTO TAFE COURSES

This project should enable occupational health and safety material to be incorporated in TAFE courses in any of the following ways. Occupational health and safety topics -



may stand alone as a course



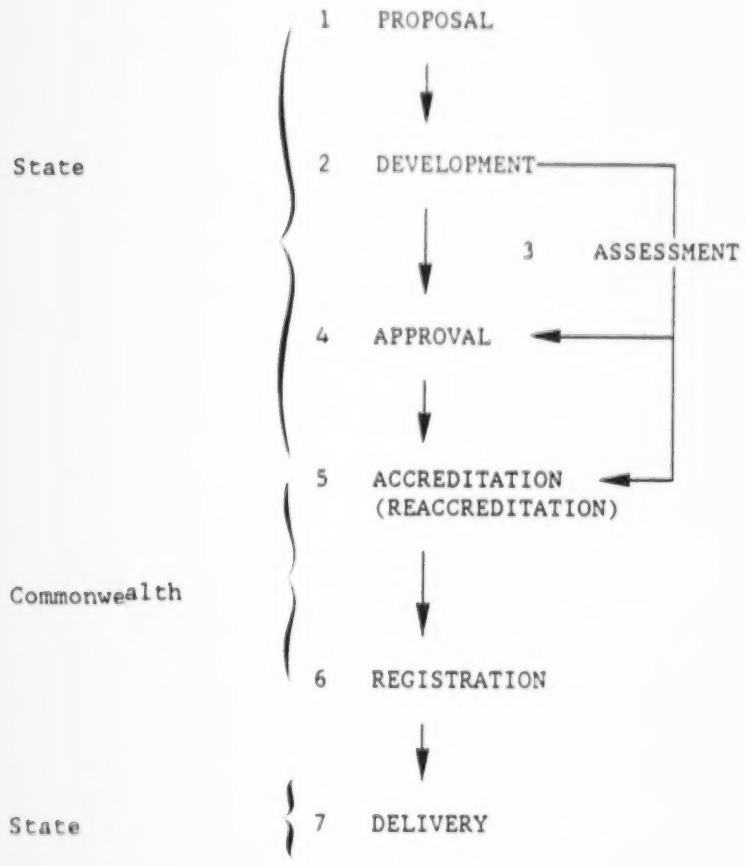
may form a basic component of a course

may be a component of a course or components

may end or link on to another course

Occupational health and safety topic(s). These may vary depending on the specific TAFE course.

For accredited TAFE courses there are seven main stages leading to course delivery:



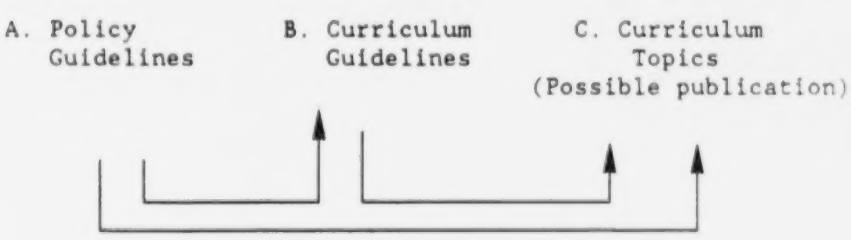
For those courses not requiring national registration, stage 6 is omitted and the Commonwealth is not involved at stage 5. For those courses developed as national common core curricula (NCC), the development of stage 2 is a joint enterprise.

This book is one of a series of publications written to assist in the integration of occupational health and safety into TAFE courses. The publications are:

A. Integrating occupational health and safety into TAFE courses: policy guidelines - written for TAFE Directors General and Industrial and Commercial Training Authorities and other award accrediting agencies.

B. Integrating occupational health and safety into TAFE courses: curriculum guidelines - written for curriculum developers but also useful for lecturers.

C. Integrating occupational health and safety into TAFE courses: curriculum topics - (Possible publication) written for curriculum developers and lecturers. The publications are connected in the following ways:



Naturally there is some overlap between these publications, and some repetition of information which is relevant to the different audiences. Where appropriate the publications also refer the reader to relevant sections in the other publications.

The material may be used in the development and delivery of curricula according to the following matrix:

	A. POLICY GUIDELINES	B. CURRICULUM GUIDELINES	C. CURRICULUM TOPICS (Possible publication)
1 PROPOSAL (based on industry/community needs	X	X	
↓			
2A CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK (approach to developing curricula)	X	X	(X)
↓			
2B CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT			
- course structure			X
- syllabus development			X
- learning materials production			
↓			
4 APPROVAL	X	X	X
↓			
5 ACCREDITATION	X	X	(X)
↓			
6 REGISTRATION			
↓			
7 DELIVERY		(X)	X

X - the publication is relevant at this stage.

(X) - the publication may be relevant at this stage.

Staff development is a vital component of curriculum development. All three project publications have been found useful in workshops which have been conducted in a number of states.

B NATIONAL TRAINING AND EDUCATION POLICY AND STRATEGY FOR OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

1 OBJECTIVES

1 The National Occupational Health and Safety Commission endorses the following objectives as the basis for a national strategy for training and education for occupational health and safety:

1.1 to contribute to ensuring that all people whose decisions and actions affect the Australian workplace, are equipped with appropriate knowledge and expertise in occupational health and safety.

1.2 to co-ordinate national development of high quality, cost-effective training and education programs in occupational health and safety which meet the needs of the workplace and the community.

2 More specific objectives, deriving from these broad objectives, serve to define priorities for strategic planning and action on the part of the National Commission.

2 TARGET GROUPS

Objective 1 to assist in ensuring that those who make organisational, financial and managerial decisions affecting the health and safety of the workplace, have access to appropriate occupational health and safety training.

Objective 2 to assist in ensuring that those who make technical and design decisions affecting the workplace have access to appropriate occupational health and safety training.

Objective 3 to ensure the systematic development of adequate training and education programs for occupational health and safety practitioners.

Objective 4 to assist in ensuring that all employees and those preparing to enter the workforce, are provided with appropriate occupational health and safety training.

Objective 5 to promote a general level of community awareness of occupational health and safety.

3 QUALITY

GOAL 2

Objective 6 to promote the provision of high quality, cost-effective, integrated occupational health and safety training and education programs.

Objective 7 to close the gap between what is known about prevention and management of occupational health and safety hazards and what is applied at the workplace.

Objective 8 to develop and promote advances in occupational health and safety knowledge including the development of a national centre of excellence in professional occupational health and safety training.

C PUBLICATIONS IN THE SERIES

There are three publications in the series which have been developed by the TAFE National Centre for Research and Development. The work was made possible by a grant and advisory help from the National Occupational Health and Safety Commission.

A Integrating occupational health and safety into TAFE courses: policy guidelines. (1989). Hill, G. L. and Mageean, P. Melbourne: Nelson-Wadsworth for the TAFE National Centre for Research and Development.

B Integrating occupational health and safety into TAFE courses: curriculum guidelines. (1989). Hill, G. L. and Mageean, P. Melbourne: Nelson-Wadsworth for the TAFE National Centre for Research and Development.

C Integrating occupational health and safety into TAFE courses: curriculum topics. (Possible publication) Mageean, P. and Hill, G. L. Melbourne: Nelson-Wadsworth for the TAFE National Centre for Research and Development.